



Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
801 North First Street, Room 400
San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number:
P.C. 11/17/03 Item: 3.1

File Number:
GP03-08-01

Council District and SNI Area:
8 – N/A

Major Thoroughfares Map Number: 85

Assessor's Parcel Number(s):
491-03-019; 491-03-164

Project Manager: David Tymn

GENERAL PLAN REPORT

2003 Fall Hearing

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

General Plan amendment request to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation from Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC) to Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) on 1.56 acres.

LOCATION: The north side of Quimby Road approximately 300 feet easterly of Mission Greens Drive.

ACREAGE: 1.56

APPLICANT/OWNER:

Braddock and Logan, Applicant/ Sikh Gurdwara-San Jose, Owner

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE / TRANSPORTATION DIAGRAM DESIGNATION:

Existing Designation: Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC)

Proposed Designation: Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

EXISTING ZONING DISTRICT(S): A(PD)

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION(S):

North: Single Family Residential – Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC)

South: Single Family Residential – Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC),
Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

East: Single Family Residential – Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC)

West: Single Family Residential – Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC)

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS:

Mitigated Negative Declaration adopted on November 3, 2003.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) on 1.56 acres.

Approved by:
Date:

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

CITY DEPARTMENT AND PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- Department of Transportation – The proposed land use change would not result in a long-term traffic impact.
- Department of Public Works – A preliminary traffic report has been submitted. The report proposes traffic improvements that have been determined to be feasible. The proposed General Plan amendment is in conformance with the Evergreen Area Development Policy.
- Municipal Water System - Future development would be required to pay various water facilities fees.
- Valley Transportation Agency – VTA supports the proposal for higher density residential uses at this site.
- Pacific Gas and Electric – PG&E indicated that they have no comment.
- Airport Land Use Commission – The ALUC finds this proposal to be consistent with the ALUC land use policies.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:

No correspondence received.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a privately initiated General Plan amendment to change the *San Jose 2020 General Plan* Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation from Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC) to Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) on a 1.56-acre site located on the north side of Quimby Road approximately 300 feet easterly of Mission Greens Drive.

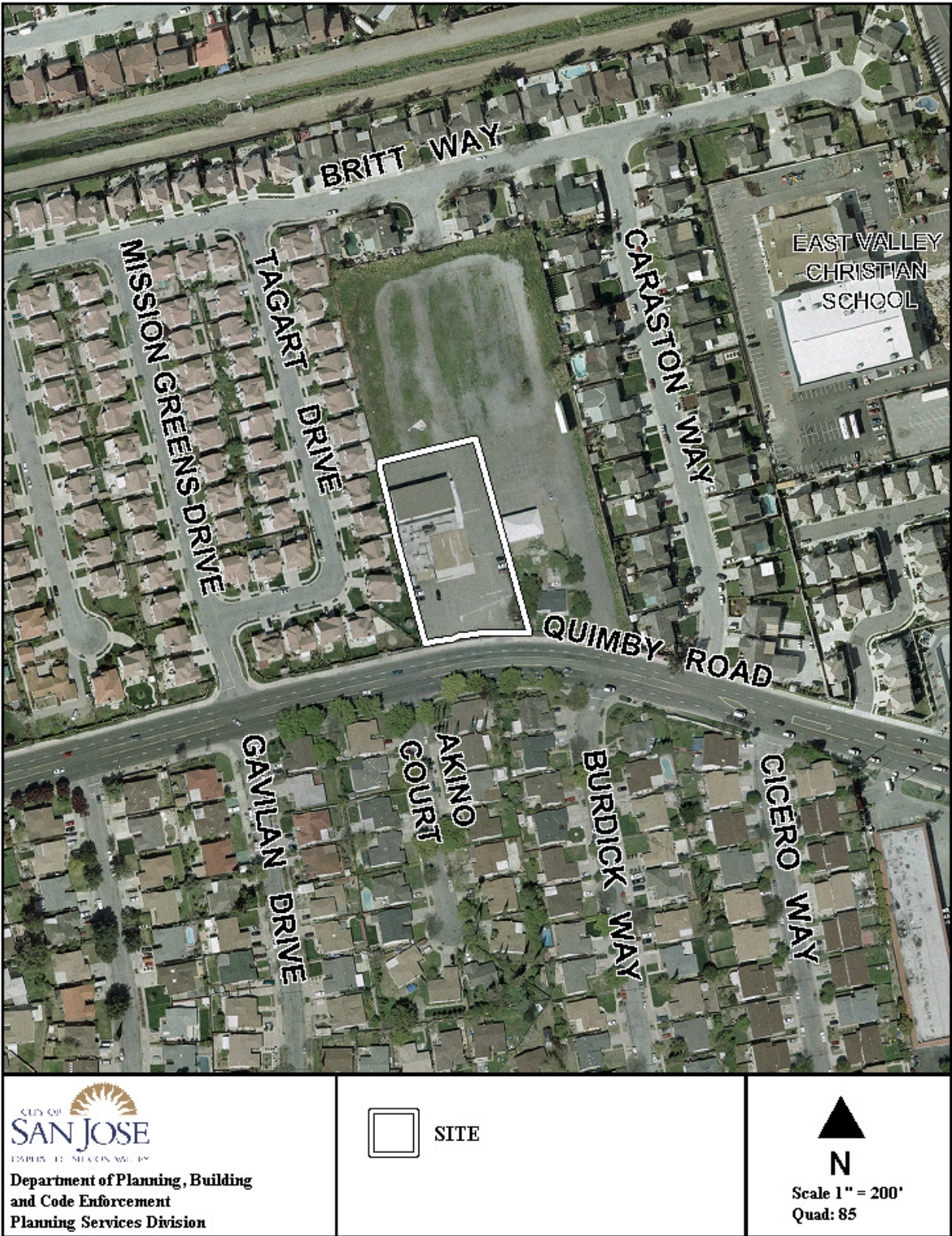
The existing General Plan designation for this property is Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC), which is typified by single-family homes on 6,000 square foot lots. This density is prevalent throughout San Jose and represents the majority of single-family residential subdivisions constructed in the 1960's and 1970's.

The proposed Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) land use designation is the next higher residential density range and could potentially be developed with one of a variety of different housing types, including single-family detached homes, courthomes, duplexes, rowhouses or townhouses. This is the typical density at which most new single-family residential is developed in San Jose. Approval of this amendment could potentially allow a maximum of 24 units on the 1.56 gross-acre site versus 12 units, which would be potentially allowed under the existing Medium



Examples of 8-16 DU/AC projects in San Jose.

GP03-08-01



Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC).

BACKGROUND

It is staff's understanding that the applicant intends to file a Planned Development Rezoning to allow 12 single-family homes on this site. The density calculation for 12 units on this site is slightly over the existing Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC) designation based on expected net acreage, hence the request for the next higher density range under the General Plan.



Examples of 8-16 DU/AC projects in San Jose.

The proposed project was not considered eligible for application of a Discretionary Alternate Use policy because it is located within the Evergreen Development Policy Area. In order to find the proposed increase in residential density in conformance with the General Plan, the project was required to demonstrate that there is feasible traffic mitigation in conformance with the Evergreen Development Policy. Based on Public Works Department review of the preliminary traffic study, there are feasible traffic improvements including signal improvements, median island/ turn lane improvements, cross walk modifications and installation of video cameras, which allow the proposed amendment to conform to the Evergreen Development Policy. The Public Works Department has indicated that a maximum of 12 units could be allowed for future development on the site. The applicant is currently constructing a 26 single-family home project on the property abutting the site to the north and east. Both sites were purchased from the Sikh church, which is in the process of constructing a new facility.

Site and Surrounding Uses

The site is a 1.56-acre lot with existing church facilities and one single-family detached residence that is associated with the church. The property has frontage on Quimby Road, which is designated on the General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram as a Minor Arterial (80-106 ft.). Arterial streets are an important part of the City's transportation network, connecting residential neighborhoods to commercial areas and to freeways and other regional facilities.

ANALYSIS

Policy Consistency

The applicant's proposal is consistent with several of the General Plan's Major Strategies, including Growth Management, Housing, Sustainable City, and Urban Conservation/Preservation. The first three of these Strategies support the increase of residential densities in appropriate locations, the provision of a variety of housing types for various economic segments of the community, and the efficient use of existing infrastructure in infill, urbanized areas where urban facilities and services are already available. In addition, the proposed General Plan amendment provides an opportunity to increase the housing supply in San Jose through a modest increase in density.

The proposed amendment also supports the Urban Conservation/Preservation Major Strategy, which seeks to sustain San Jose's unique neighborhoods. The Urban Conservation/Preservation Major Strategy would be furthered through the eventual development of the site with homes that are well designed and integrated with the existing neighborhood.

Land Use Compatibility

General Plan Residential Land Use Policy No. 9 states that when changes in residential densities are proposed, the City should consider such factors as neighborhood character and identity, compatibility of land uses and impacts on livability. A key issue with the proposed amendment is the compatibility of a slightly higher residential density with the surrounding neighborhood. An increase in density from Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC) to Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) would be consistent with the neighborhood character and identity of the broader neighborhood because single-family homes are the typical housing type constructed in both density ranges, whether on traditional single lots or surrounding a common driveway. Although lot sizes would be smaller under the Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) designation than some of the surrounding neighborhood, the general character of the land use (i.e., single-family homes) would be the same. Although the applicant has indicated that their intent is to construct single-family homes at the lower end of the Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) range, staff has analyzed the amendment with consideration of possible future development at all densities within the 8-16 DU/AC range.

At the time the applicant is ready to move forward with a development proposal and if this General Plan Amendment is approved, the applicant would be required to submit a rezoning application to the City for review. The zoning application would be analyzed by Planning staff and subject to community meetings and public hearings. Staff's analysis must determine the project's compliance with the General Plan, the Zoning Code, Residential Design Guidelines, and other City policies. "Infill" development on parcels within an existing neighborhood, such as this site, raise many design questions, and the policy documents mentioned above contain policies, codes, and guidelines to ensure compatible development on a site in the context of its surroundings.

The Residential Design Guidelines emphasize that the architectural design of new development must take into account the single-family character and scale of the surrounding development. While of a slightly higher density than some of the existing developments, new residential development can be designed to appear as a logical extension of the existing neighborhood. New structures should have appropriate architectural design, setbacks (i.e., distances to other structures, sidewalks, etc.), and orientation to the street and other buildings that are comparable, but not necessarily identical, to the pattern of development in the surrounding neighborhood.

The intent of the Residential Design Guidelines is to enhance the quality of existing neighborhoods by promoting new residential development that protects and reinforces the desirable attributes of existing neighborhoods. The Guidelines include development standards that promote:

- The gradual transitions between existing and new development.
- The protection of the privacy of adjacent residents by greater setbacks for 2-story structures.
- The comparable orientation of new development to the existing neighborhood.
- The determination of appropriate building materials and landscaping.

In addition, the Residential Design Guidelines address the specific design challenges resulting from different single-family housing types that could occur within the proposed Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) designation, including single-family detached and attached houses, courthomes, and rowhouses. Specific standards exist for perimeter setbacks, parking and building orientation for these different housing types. Compliance with these guidelines would be analyzed when a specific development is proposed.

For the reasons stated above, staff has determined that the proposed amendment is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The proposed change in the General Plan land use designation on the subject site was analyzed in an initial study that resulted in a Mitigated Negative Declaration. A traffic analysis was conducted and determined that there is no potential impact to the regional transportation system in the long term as a result of the proposed amendment.

The Public Works Department has reviewed a preliminary traffic report and has indicated that proposed traffic improvements including signal improvements, median island/ turn lane improvements, cross walk modifications and installation of video cameras have been determined to be feasible and therefore would be in conformance with the Evergreen Area Development Policy.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The property owners and occupants within a 1,000-foot radius were sent a newsletter regarding the two General Plan Community Meetings that were held on October 14 and 15, 2003. They also received a notice of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and a notice of the public hearings to be held on the subject amendment before the Planning Commission in November and City Council in December. In addition, the Department's web-site contains information regarding the General Plan process, amendments, staff reports, and hearing schedule. This site is available to any member of the public and contains the most current information regarding the status of the amendments.

Staff received one phone call from a resident who indicated that the Evergreen area does not need any more "high density housing". Staff explained that the proposed General Plan amendment would typically allow between 8 and 16 dwelling units per acre, but in the Evergreen Development Policy Area, this property could construct no more than 12 units due to traffic constraints. Furthermore, staff explained that the developer has indicated the intent to construct single-family detached homes similar to the project that is under construction directly adjacent to the east. Staff received no written correspondence from the public.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends approval of the proposed change to the General Plan Land Use designation from Medium Low Density (8 DU/AC) to Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) on the subject 1.56-acre site.